

## MENTAL HEALTH AND OFFENDERS

IDENTIFYING MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS/ISSUES  
OR MENTAL ILLNESSES IN CLIENTS

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YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT'S WRONG BUT  
YOU KNOW SOMETHING IS NOT RIGHT

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- ▶ Discuss common mental health problems/issues/illnesses
- ▶ Provide signs and symptoms for common mental health problems/issues/illness
- ▶ Discuss what to look for in identifying signs and symptoms in clients
- ▶ What happens when you believe you have identified mental health problems/issues/illnesses in clients

### WHAT WE WILL COVER

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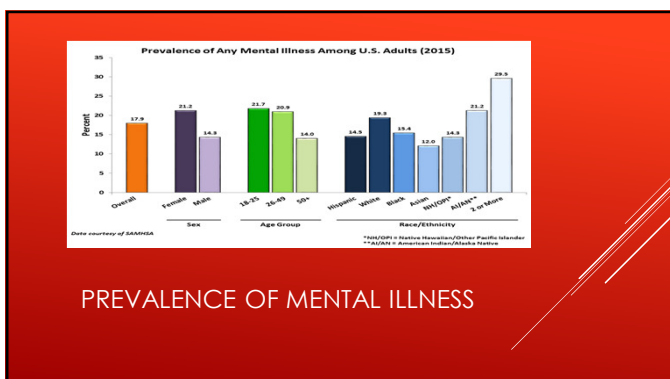
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- 50% of Offenders have some sort of mental health problem/issue/illness

### PREVALENCE OF MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS/ISSUES OR ILLNESS

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Major Depression  
Mania  
Psychotic Disorder

### COMMON MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS/ISSUES/ILLNESSES FOUND AMONG OFFENDERS

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1. Feelings/behaviors such as persistent sadness
2. Loss of interest in activities

### MAJOR DEPRESSION

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1. Psychomotor agitation
2. Persistent anger or irritability
3. Insomnia or hypersomnia

## MANIA

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- ▶ Signs of delusions
  - ▶ Belief that other people are controlling their brain or thoughts
  - ▶ Can read their minds
  - ▶ Are spying on them
- ▶ Hallucinations
  - ▶ Reports seeing things that others do not see
  - ▶ Hearing voices that others do not hear

## PSYCHOTIC DISORDER

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Deficits in intellectual functioning               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Mental abilities</li> <li>▶ Reasoning off</li> <li>▶ Lack of problem solving ability</li> <li>▶ Lack of planning ability</li> <li>▶ Ability to do abstract thinking</li> <li>▶ Poor judgement</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Deficits in adaptive functioning               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Skills to live independently</li> <li>▶ Communication</li> <li>▶ Social skills</li> <li>▶ Personal independence at home or in community settings</li> <li>▶ School/work functions</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
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## IDD – INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT DISABILITY

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- ▶ Substance-use disorders
  - ▶ are patterns of symptoms resulting from the use of a substance that you continue to take, despite experiencing problems as a result.
- ▶ Substance-induced disorders
  - ▶ include intoxication, withdrawal, and other substance/medication-induced mental disorders, are detailed alongside substance use disorders.

**SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER**

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- ▶ Co-occurring disorders
  - ▶ Mental health disorder and at least one substance use disorder
  - ▶ Co-morbid psychiatric and medical diagnoses
  - ▶ Interactive with each other, one may predispose the person to the other, symptoms may overlap both MH and SUD and some MH diagnoses may predispose the person to more severe substance abuse
- ▶ Dually diagnosed
  - ▶ Mental health disorder and IDD (Intellectual Developmental Disability)

**COMMON MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS/ISSUES/ILLNESSES FOUND AMONG OFFENDERS**

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### HOW DO YOU IDENTIFY MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES OR MENTAL ILLNESS IN YOUR CLIENT

- A recent history
- Symptoms of a mental health problem/issue/illness

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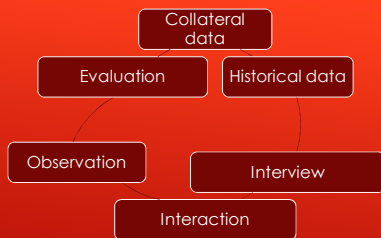
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### IDENTIFICATION OF MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS/ISSUES/ILLNESSES

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#### Signs/Symptoms

- ▶ Persistent sad, numb or empty mood and affect
- ▶ Loss of interest or pleasure in activities
- ▶ Increased/decreased appetite
- ▶ Insomnia/hypersomnia
- ▶ Psychomotor agitation

#### Signs/Symptoms

- ▶ Feelings of worthlessness or excessive guilt
- ▶ Diminished ability to concentrate or think
- ▶ Persistent anger or irritability
- ▶ Substance abuse
- ▶ History of physical/sexual abuse

### IDENTIFICATION OF MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS/ISSUES/ILLNESSES

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## Signs/Symptoms

- ▶ Distressing or uncontrollable event or exposure to stressful life events
- ▶ Poor coping skills and the inability to manage environmental stressors
- ▶ Medical illness
- ▶ Bereavement – death or divorce
- ▶ Loss of job

## Signs/Symptoms

- ▶ Exposure to traumatic events, e.g. violence
- ▶ Poverty
- ▶ Criminal attitudes
- ▶ Peer networks
- ▶ Educational deficits
- ▶ Poor social supports

### IDENTIFICATION OF MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS/ISSUES/ILLNESSES

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- ▶ Do you currently believe that someone can control your mind by putting thoughts into your head or taking thoughts out of your head?
- ▶ Do you currently feel that other people know your thoughts and can read your mind?
- ▶ Have you currently lost or gained as much as two pounds a week for several weeks without even trying?
- ▶ Have you or your family or friends noticed that you are currently much more active than you usually are?

### BRIEF JAIL MENTAL HEALTH SCREEN 2005 POLICY RESEARCH ASSOCIATES, INC

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- ▶ Do you currently feel like you have to talk or move more slowly than you usually do?
- ▶ Have there currently been a few weeks when you felt like you were useless or sinful?
- ▶ Are you currently taking any medication prescribed for you by a physician for any emotional or mental health problems?
- ▶ Have you ever been in a hospital for emotional or mental health problems?

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## COLLECTING COLLATERAL/HISTORICAL DATA

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- ☐ Interview family/friends/co-workers
- ☐ Request and review school records
- ☐ Request and review work records
- ☐ Records of any hospitalizations
- ☐ Records of any mental health treatment
- ☐ Records of any medical treatment

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### ► **Personality changes:**

- A sudden and unusual change in personality without there being any valid reason for it. If a person you know is acting or feeling like a different person altogether, or is acting uncharacteristically for a more extended period, then it is somewhat alarming. The warning bells here would be reacting differently to things and people, not enjoying their hobbies or things they previously found pleasure in, and acting out of character.

### ► **Mood swings:**

- Sudden and abrupt changes in mood like uncharacteristic and unreasonable anger, mood fluctuations like feeling too high or too low, a sudden attack of sadness, anxiety, irritability, and agitation.

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► **Social withdrawal:**

- Withdrawing socially, making up excuses to avoid going out with friends or meeting people, isolating oneself as much as possible is a red flag that something is wrong. It might not necessarily be a mental illness

► **Changes in sleep and appetite:**

- Eating too much or too little, having unusual cravings, sleeping for long hours or having insomnia, not feeling well-rested after waking up are all signs that there is something wrong with a person's mental or physical health.

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► **Disconnecting emotionally:**

- Feeling apathetic, detached and clueless, or having trouble relating to people's emotions or understanding why they are behaving a certain way usually points towards a mental or emotional problem.

► **Mind and thinking:**

- Having a hard time concentrating, confusion, forming a logical thought, having difficulty communicating, retaining information, delusions, disconnecting with reality and memory problems are all clear indications of mental disorders.

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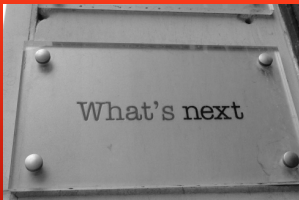
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IDENTIFICATION OF MENTAL HEALTH  
PROBLEMS/ISSUES/ILLNESSES

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- ▶ RULE OUT MALINGERING
- ▶ ARE THE MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS/ ISSUES SEVERE ENOUGH TO AFFECT FUNCTIONING
- ▶ IS THERE A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CRIME AND THE MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS/ISSUES/ILLNESS

IDENTIFICATION OF MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS/ISSUES/ILLNESSES

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DO YOU SEEK A FORENSIC EVALUATION?

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- ▶ A FORENSIC EVALUATION IS AN EVALUATION OF THE MENTAL STATE OF A DEFENDANT'S CAPACITY TO PROCEED TO TRIAL
- ▶ COURT-ORDERED
- ▶ LIMITED CONFIDENTIALITY
- ▶ LEGAL FACT FINDING – ACCURACY OF THE EVENTS OF THE CRIME

FORENSIC EVALUATION

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►POTENTIAL OUTCOMES

- COMPETENCY RESTORATION
- NOT GUILTY BY REASON OF INSANITY
- NOTE: (Adults with severe psychotic disorders and cognitive impairments are more likely than defendants without these conditions to be found incompetent to stand trial and are less likely to be restored to competency.)

FORENSIC EVALUATION

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